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ASHLAND, O., Feb. 2, 1887.

The Bible the Bond of Union.

The Bible alone is the only bond of union for Christians.

I. In matters of Faith, Doctrine, Worship, Piety, Righteousness, and morality of the Gospel Institution, it is an *infallable* and *immutable* guide, which cannot be touched or set aside by uninspired and uncommissioned hands. *In Essentials Unity.*

II. In matters of expediency, such as how often shall we commune, wash feet, eat the Lord's Supper, or at what hour shall we meet for public worship; and in all things pertaining to the affairs of local church there is no ritual prescribed, and no unity of practice required, and in the absence of a *thus saith the Lord* each congregation has the liberty to decide for itself. *In nonessentials Liberty.*

III. Where there are honest differences of opinions between congregations and individuals, upon matters of mere expediency; and in matters of faith and doctrine and piety, resulting from a faulty education, lack of experience, or circumstantial surroundings, there should be no disposition to ostracize, persecute or despise one another, or "Judge one another lest we be judged;" but rather a disposition of fervent charity, that will seek to discover the truth for ourselves and to one another. "*In all things Charity.*"

IV. The human plan of securing a union of faith and practice through the instrumentality of written Creeds, and Confessions of Faith have proved signal failures, and should be forever discarded. Take, for instance, two of the most popular creeds of the present day, the Westminster and the Methodist.

To say nothing of the lesser parties that once formed one communion we now have no less than *nine* separate communions all professing the Westminster articles in some form or other. Of the Methodists there are now *five* grand divisions and a half dozen minor divisions.

But come nearer home and behold the church that started out without a creed, and maintained its unity on the gospel alone as long as it was satisfied with that, but finally when it incorporated its council decisions into a voluminous creed and declared it *mandatory* the church almost simultaneously dissolved into three separate communions. But for the above departure this church would yet be united. But why multiply evidence; there never was a protestant creed that did not generate a number of divisions, and creeds have been the bane to Christian union and will be until they are forever abolished.

It is also an incontrovertable fact that in all the separate communions of the creed there exist numerous worthy communicants noted for their morality and piety, who are disloyal to the creeds to which they feign allegience, and are "heretics" to the orthodoxy of the creeds as well as others.

V. The chief and only hindrance to the success of the *Bible-alone doctrine* in keeping the unity of the faith of Christians is, that many of its advocates approach it with a set of human symbols and opinions in their minds that virtually amount to a creed. It would be, perhaps, as well if not better to have a written creed than an unwritten standard of orthodoxy.

As the success of the great protestant reformation was greatly hindered by the fact that the reformers themselves were not wholly freed from the errors of popery, as the gospel-alone doctrine is hindered mostly from the circumstances that many of its advocates are still in spiritual thralldom to the illiberal and non progressive traditions of the voluminous creed from which they sought to become emancipated.

The only way to give the Bible-alone doctrine a fair test the BIBLE must not only be substituted for *Human Creeds* but FAITH must be substituted for speculation; UNITY of FAITH for UNITY *of opinions*: THE POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD for *human legislation and opinions*; PIETY for *ceremony*; *Morality* for *partisan zeal*; THE PRACTICE OF RELIGION for *the mere profession* of it; and the great and necessary work of accomplishing a union of God's children will be effectually secured; and it will be a lasting and glorious consummation.

E. L. Y.

Are Continued Discussions Beneficial?

To be silenced is not always to have the worst of an argument. When Hananiah, by eloquent speech and no less eloquent symbol, demonstrated that Jeremiah's prophecies were all wrong, we read that Jeremiah quietly "went his way," leaving his opponent to exult as a victor among the priests and the people who thronged the temple. A man who knew that he was on the Lord's side, and that he had spoken the truth, could afford to do that. The bitter sequel showed whether Hananiah or Jeremiah was right. There are occasions when it is the part of a wise man to remain silent. When one is in the midst of scoffers, who have proven to their own satisfaction that there is no God, that the Bible is a fiction, and that immortality is a dream, it is sometimes better to firmly say your say in a meek spirit and then quietly go your way. There is no use wasting time in fruitless parleying. What does it matter if the enemies of God's truth enjoy an occasional chief triumph? Truth needs but little vindication from the hands of men.

So also in the controversy concerning unauthorized, traditional practice and unreasonable dogmas, when bitter things are liable to be said, when we are on the side of truth and charity, we can afford, after having fearlessly expressed our opinion to silently await the result. In due time, truth will be vindicated. Caviling and continued discussion very seldom help the cause of truth along.

M.

The Peace of Europe.

Three of the greatest living statesmen of this century have lately made speeches in favor of maintaining peace. The means by which they expect to maintain peace is that of being fully prepared for war.

William, VonMolke and Bismarck used their combined influence to prevail upon the German Reichstag to pass the bill to increase the strength and efficiency of the German Army, so that peace might be assured to the empire. The other nations of Europe have been making similar provisions to maintain peace until the combined standing army of Europe involves the employment of millions of men and the best resources of these powerful nations.

The larger the army and the greater the resources of one nation to maintain peace, is made, the larger and more powerful the army of the other nation must also be made to maintain the same much desired peace.

There is, therefore, upon this theory, no safety of peace until the utmost limit of the resources of each nation has exhausted itself in the preparation for war. Then what? Will it then be peace, or war? Undoubtedly the latter. The preparations have not been for peace, but for war, and war it will be.

When the angelic host wheeled in line above the plains of Bethlehem, at the advent of the world's Redeemer, and sang glory to God in the highest, peace, and good will to men, the grand consummation of the benediction was expected to be reached through other methods than the arbitrament of the sword. "Put up again thy sword in its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," was the motto of the Prince of Peace.

The Princes of Europe have however, concluded that in this nineteenth century of the Christian era, it is required to have a standing army of about four millions of men with all the horribly destructive implements of modern warfare, together with the human wisdom of about nineteen kings, and emperors, with a courtly retinue scholars, warriors, and statesmen, to insure peace and good will to men over a space of territory not as large as the United States. This certainly is nothing but a travesty upon the teachings of the Savior and the religion of Christ. The motto that to insure peace we must prepare for war is contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and its futility, so abundantly demonstrated, illustrates the superiority of the wisdom of the carpenters son of Nazareth over the combined wisdom of the world. Disband your armies, oh ye kings! and Emperors. Convert your implements of war, oh nations of the earth, into instruments of peaceful industry, your ships of war into ships of commerce, appropriate your revenues, which you now consume in preparing to fight and kill, to the purpose of alleviating the sorrows of the poor and the elevation of the race and you will attain to the peace which you now pretend to seek, but which you do not find because you seek not aright.

Y.

Now is the time to renew your subscription.

EDITORIAL ITEMS.

Bro. Brown is ready to go to Canaan.

There is a power of enthusiasm show in the correspondence this week, and there is no other side except a few letters about the Tiosa, Ind., church matters, that are kept back. That is right; if you have any thing encouraging, write it, and send it to the EVANGELIST for publication. Sometimes we are censured for making one side appear too bright, and saying nothing about the other. We believe we tell no untruth, and we trust that none of our correspondents will; but where there is any ground for being hopeful then let others share in your anticipations. At least do not be throwing unnecessary shadows over your brethren and co-workers. The Scriptures say contentment with godliness is great gain. That is what all Christians should have. We try to have godliness and we know we have contentment. We are contented with the least success, and heartily thank the Lord for it. If we were not satisfied with moderate success, then we would make everybody sick with complaints—no we would not either. It is wicked to make others heartsick, even if you are thus diseased yourself. Misery, they say, loves company and it is well that he should have it if he can find it; but he is a mean Misery who insists on making other people miserable or unhappy because he is so. The Christian should have a smile for everybody, and make them glad, because his home is in heaven, and he will get there by and by.

In comparing the progress of the Brethren church with the history of other reform movements, there is abundant cause to thank God and take courage. We will be crowned with most wonderful success if we keep humble, and follow Christ.

The EVANGELIST sends a most hearty greeting to the Brethren Church in Philadelphia. May the good Lord encourage and strengthen the brethren there, and visit this new vine of his right-hand planting. We rejoice with them, and may our rejoicing not be in vain.

THE CHURCH MEMBER'S HAND-BOOK, by the Brethren Tract Society, Hagerstown, Md., is a collection of religious miscellany. It is well worth the money asked for it.

Bro. E. S. Miller, of Dayton, Ohio, preached at one of the places of meeting of the Waterloo church on the 23.

If legislation could save any one the Law would have answered instead of the Gospel.

Personal ambition has been the bane of the church in all ages of the world. Self must be gratified although the church will suffer.

Bro. R. Z. Replogle is having some success in his work at Berlin, Pa.

If it is decided to hold a Convention in June, it will make busy times between now and then.

It is still winter and an excellent time to solicit subscriptions.

As we close our forms for this week, a communication from Bro. E. S. Miller informs us that his daughter is dangerously ill at Waterloo, Iowa. He and his wife left Dayton as soon as the news was received, and have been in Iowa about two weeks, awaiting the end or recovery, with that anxiety which only fond parents can have. May the Lord in his mercy be with them.

Elder S. C. Stump started on a semi-missionary trip to Thayer County, Nebraska last week.

The members of the National Executive Committee to arrange for a future convention of the Brethren church are Elders S. C. Stump and E. L. Yoder, Falls City, Neb., J. W. H. Bauman, Morrill Kansas, John Nicholson, Hudson, Iowa, and Daniel Crofford, Johnstown, Pa. The committee meets at Falls City, Neb., Feb. 10th.

Bro. J. H. Worst, of Dakota, is now visiting in Ohio, and will remain a few weeks. Any church desiring his services a short time, during this month, are invited to correspond with this office. He did not expect to visit this State, this winter but a way was opened for him to do so, by securing a person to take charge of his work at home during his absence, and, so, suddenly he is coming upon us.

Bro. J. W. Smouse came to Ashland last Monday to spend a few days. His meetings at Ankenytown were very successful. There were eleven added to the church. He is nearly worn out, as he has been constantly at work for several months, and will rest a few days before he commences labor again. We are pleased to have him visit Ashland, and happy over the new acquaintanceship formed.

Brethren who have sent me personal letters demanding attention and a careful reply, will please be patient. There are more than half a dozen such awaiting my attention, and it is difficult to find time amidst my other duties to give them the attention they demand.

A. L. GARBER.

Response to Bro. J. B. Yoder.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—When we, at Fair Haven, the church in which you hold your membership, decided to hold a protracted meeting, we did not know whether it would continue any length of time and so did not have it published. We did not then know that there would be good sleighing. We thought we would begin a meeting and be governed by circumstances as to its continuance. This conclusion we arrived at, on the day of our regular business meeting, and this business meeting had been regularly announced and every member should have been present including those in the land of Canaan. We also had a communion meeting in the fall and but a short time either before or after the business meeting, and this communion meeting was published in the Brethren EVANGELIST, and not only our own members including those in the land of Canaan, but members of neighboring churches were cordially invited to be with us. But the Kilbuck hills, it seems, were as usual in the way. Neither of the members in Canaan came, for which we were sorry, for we do think there are two kinds of meetings that every member in the church should attend, and these are the love feast and business, and if members were prompt in attending these, they would be likely to be well informed as to all the workings in the church, and no special notifications would be necessary. We are however, sorry that you did not know of the series of meetings, and the foregoing are our apologies. Hope it will be satisfactory and that we will all try to do better in the future.

As regards a lecture at Canaan, I am afraid since the sleighing is gone—the muddy roads have set in—it would hardly do to risk an enterprise, so "long, broad and deep," as my California Lecture; but if you will exert yourselves to get out a crowd on Saturday evening, Feb. 5th, I will try to be with you and not talk quite so long as I did at Ashland. I think two hours will do for Canaan, and I hope it will not only be a success in many but in all respects. But I will write you privately, and let you do the publishing.

P. J. BROWN.

Congress, O., Jan. 24, 1887.

Prosperity tries the human heart with the deepest probe, and draws forth the hidden character.